

INTERRACIAL REVIEW

A JOURNAL FOR CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY



THE CONFRATERNITY AND THE NEGRO

Louis T. Achille

•

CALLING CATHOLIC LEADERS

The Editors

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REFLECTIONS OF A SEMINARIAN

Michael Lensing, O.S.B.

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NO POSTPONEMENT

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Statistics



Castel Gandolfo, Oct. 27 (A.P.). — Pope Pius XII in the first Encyclical of his reign blamed "the denial of God" for leading the world to war and pleaded for peace today.

— *The New York Sun*

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THE REGISTRAR

INTERRACIAL REVIEW

Christian Democracy

Christian Democracy rejects artificial inequalities due to racial myths, material greed or physical violence and recognizes only such accidental inequalities as necessarily accompany human life at all times and in all places.

As the objective of the Catholic interracial program, we define Christian Democracy as a society in which the God-given dignity and destiny of every human person is fully recognized, in laws, government, institutions and human conduct.

POSTULATES

- The Catholic Interracial Program has a twofold aim: (1) the combating of race prejudice; (2) the attainment of social justice for the whole social group regardless of race.

- "Nothing does more harm to the progress of Christianity and is more against its spirit than . . . race prejudice amongst Christians. — There is nothing more widely spread in the Christian world."
— *Jacques Maritain*

- "From the evidence on hand today, we cannot scientifically prove that the Nordic or the Negro is superior or inferior, one to the other."
— *Rev. John M. Cooper*

- The interracial problem is the greatest world problem of today. It is the major threat to international peace. In America the interracial problem is one of grave national concern. It is perhaps the biggest problem confronting the Catholic Church in America.

- "Intolerance towards Negroes in the United States is perhaps the acme of the racial intolerance of modern nationalism."
— *Carlton J. H. Hayes*

- The spiritual aspect of the Catholic interracial program flows from the common membership of all races in the Mystical Body of Christ and the common expression of this unity in the Church's liturgy.

- Prejudice on the part of Catholic laity is a barrier to the conversion of the Negro and a trial to the new found Faith of the Negro convert.

- "We must concede that the natural rights of the Negro are identical in number and sacredness to the rights of white persons."
— *Rev. Francis J. Gilligan, S.T.D.*

- Catholic principles maintaining the equality of all men and upholding the sanctity of the Negro's natural rights, impose upon all Catholics a rule of conduct which must be followed, regardless of any temporary inconveniences, apprehensions or difficulties that may be encountered.

December — 1941

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INTERRACIAL REVIEW

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The Interracial Field

INTERESTING STATISTICS

Number of Negroes in U. S.	13,000,000
Estimated Number of Protestant Negroes. . .	5,000,000
Estimated Number of Catholic Negroes.	300,000
Estimated Number Unchurched.	7,750,000
Number of Negroes Attending Colleges.	23,038
Number of Catholic Negro Churches.	282
Number of Catholic Negro Schools.	263
Negro Enrollment in Catholic Schools.	50,000
Priests Engaged in Colored Missions.	450
Sisters Engaged in Colored Missions.	1,600
Negroes in New York City.	478,346
Negroes in Chicago.	233,000
Negroes in Philadelphia.	219,000
Negroes in Washington.	132,068

The Challenge of Catholic Charity

The challenge that Catholic charity presents to the laity today is broader and deeper than ever before. It is not merely that we must give money to the annual charity campaign, or that women should sew garments for orphans, or that men should serve as counsellors to Boy Scouts of respectable families. Catholic charity cuts deeper than that.

Many of us must change our attitudes and even our hearts. Many of us must learn to love our brother even if his skin is dark. We must love our employees even to the point of giving them a just wage; if we are laboring people, we must be fair to our employer. We must not disdain the poor and the humble; we must cherish them as children of God.

And because our neighbor is a child of God we shall not be content to relieve his distress or cure his disease; we shall strive to create in our community and nation such conditions as will permit him to rise above poverty and disease and family disintegration.

Here, then, is the two-fold challenge of Catholic charity—to lift up the brother who is in distress; but better far, to save him before he falls distressed. If Christian people everywhere will accept this challenge they will do a service to God, their neighbor and their country. If they reject the challenge, let them frankly admit that since they do not love their neighbor neither do they love their God.

—Most Rev. Robert E. Lucey, D.D.

This Month and Next

The excellent article by LOUIS T. ACHILLE is from his address delivered at the recent National Congress of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, at Philadelphia. Mr. Achille, a Catholic Negro, was born in France. He is Assistant Professor of French at Howard University . . . "Reflections of a Seminarian" was written several years ago by REV. MICHAEL LENSING, O.S.B., while he was in the Seminary. Father Lensing is now a Professor at New Subaco Abbey, Ark. . . . MISS MARGARET McCORMACK and THOMAS F. DOYLE contribute the book reviews.

Pronouncement

*Adopted by the Catholic Intercollegiate
Interracial Conference of Philadelphia
DECEMBER 14, 1941*

1. We support the demands of Negroes that they be given their just share of jobs and equal rights in the national defense program.
2. We also urge that the Catholic employer be willing to accept the duly qualified Negro applicant for work, and that the Catholic labor leader make every effort to have qualified Negroes be admitted to all unions.
3. We condemn the fostering of race prejudice and all the practices based thereon as destructive of national unity.
4. We emphasize the sacred obligations of members of The Mystical Body of Christ to seek for minority groups full participation in privileges common to all humanity.
5. We urge that all Catholic college students study Interracial justice in the light of the Papal Encyclicals.
6. We recommend that the personal conduct of our Catholic college students towards their fellow-citizens, the Negroes, always exemplify the Christian principles of justice and love.

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No. 12

NO POSTPONEMENT

Today the American people from every section of the country, of every race, of every national origin are united in a stern determination to prosecute the war until victory is ours.

In our national effort to achieve victory and peace, we anticipate that certain voices may be raised to urge that all steps to secure a greater measure of interracial justice for the thirteen million Negroes be again postponed "for the duration of the emergency" as was done during the last World War. This would be a grave mistake and one that would entirely ignore consideration of the morale of this important racial group. It is necessary to recognize that the continued denial to Negroes of many of the essential opportunities of life has created a certain amount of racial despair regarding their own security and progress. The slowly developing program of interracial justice should be *accelerated* by reason of the emergency. It should not be deferred or retarded.

Furthermore, in the present conflict, America is

avowedly engaged in a war to preserve democracy and democratic institutions. On the other hand, our enemies have openly declared that they are seeking to destroy democracy. The issue is clearly drawn. Certainly, from the standpoint of maintaining a decent respect for the opinions of mankind it is essential that America should here and now demonstrate to the world that the rights and responsibilities of democracy are fully shared by Negro Americans.

It is the opinion of *The Review* that there be no postponement of the efforts to abolish the outworn traditions of American racism. Furthermore, the situation requires that even greater efforts be made to remove the many barriers and discriminations that have so long blocked the path of Negro progress. These restrictions have not only weakened the morale of the Negro, but they have already given our enemies the chance to criticise and ridicule the sincerity and genuineness of democracy in America.

War With Japan

For the first time in its history, our nation finds itself engaged in formal warfare with a non-white race. Modern total warfare, as the President observed in his address of December 9, stops at nothing. In the field of propaganda, as in the field of physical violence, it makes use of any weapon that suits its purpose. The only restraint laid upon war-making today is the fear that the enemy may resort to the same destructive practices.

For this reason, it is not impossible to suppose that heat of war excitement may make capital of racial differences between the two combatants, the United States and Japan. Such an appeal can be developed into a two-edged sword. It can be used to inflame white racial prejudice. A subtle appeal, from the other side, can be made by the enemy countries to the very real sentiment of resentment and bitterness among the Negroes in this country who are conscious of the contrast between our professions of democracy and the way they see it fulfilled in actual practice. Such appeals, indeed, have already been made by the Axis Powers. That which is immediately and presently experienced counts for more, in the mind of the ordinary man, than that which as yet he has not seen and can with difficulty conceive. Such arguments may happen to prove effective, and arouse no small measure of confusion and unrest.

Happily, opinion among either group, the white or the colored, in this country, has definitely refused to allow itself to be stampeded by any such considerations. Whatever may be conjectured about the Japanese, all, Negro and white alike, are mindful of the fact that China's four hundred millions are on our side. Any comfort given to Japan would be the betrayal of this greatest in numbers of all the non-white races of the world. America's colored citizens have unconditionally thrown in their lot with the defense of our nation's liberties. The response of Negro American patriotism has been immediate, universal and electric in its enthusiasm. There is no branch of military or civilian aid in which the Negro is not ready and willing, at every sacrifice, to serve.

All the more reason, then, that every trace of substance for such a false racial appeal should be removed. It will be removed, and will only be removed, when integral justice is fulfilled in all those areas of

public life and public service by which the nation comes in contact with the life of the individual Negro citizen.

Boston Interracial Council

To those whose ideas of Boston are derived from the old Abolitionist days, news of the formation of a Catholic Interracial Council in that city may sound like the traditional report that the Dutch have taken Holland. Whatever its actual fulfilment may have been, Boston earned the title of a symbol for racial liberty, equality and justice. But symbols are one thing, reality is another; and Boston of today shares the status common to all other large Northern cities. Even there, the Negro finds himself pushed out of jobs in which his group traditionally found employment and facing new problems in connection with the defense industries. New generations forget the lessons of the past and lend an open ear to the persuasive pattern of prejudice. Frank discrimination is practiced in defiance of State legislation. Racial conflict and its attendant evils are as imminent there as in dozens of other similar communities. As usual, as in all the great cities of the North, the *real* problem, the real challenge of Catholic social justice, is found not so much in the sharply prejudiced few, but in the great mass of well-meaning, indifferent citizens. They take things for granted and because they have never given serious thought to *all* that is meant, to *all* that is implied, in being a Catholic or a citizen of the United States.

Lovers of interracial justice, therefore, will naturally applaud the action of the Most Rev. Richard J. Cushing, Auxiliary Bishop of Boston, in establishing a Catholic Interracial Council in that city. "Justice, first, even before charity: this is the natural order, the supernatural order, the God-given order, the Catholic order," said Bishop Cushing in a memorable address at the Council's establishment. "If strict justice," said the Bishop, "the barest justice, were only meted out to the Negro, there would be no interracial problem." Stating that the colored "want no paternalism," the Bishop observed that "all they want is the opportunity accorded them by strict justice."

Experience of the Catholic Interracial Council of New York City enables us to assure Bishop Cushing of the wisdom and practicability of the plan which

he has adopted. The Boston Council expects to bring together lawyers, physicians, teachers, civil servants, newspaper men and business men of both races. One of its most important committees will be that on Employment Opportunity, which will seek to remove barriers to employment in places where the Negro is now excluded.

With the increasing tensions created by the war; with the increasing conviction among thoughtful people, and particularly among Catholics, that lasting and practical solutions *can* be found to even the most difficult conditions, the green light is now set for every larger Northern center to follow the splendid example set by Bishop Cushing in the Archdiocese of Boston, whose venerable and distinguished head, His Eminence Cardinal O'Connell, has always placed his benediction on every movement that tended to promote charity and justice between the races.

Education Against Racism

In a recent radio broadcast, the Most Rev. Joseph M. Corrigan, Rector of the Catholic University of America, warned that only through Christ would national and international affairs be settled. He condemned totalitarianism and the racial and religious persecutions it has engendered. In meeting this menace, a Catholic university, he said, must prove that a sane government can never be founded on principles that deny "the immortal dignity of the human soul." It must make the student determined to acquire the habit of thinking rightly.

"Today, as we view the world," declared Bishop Corrigan, we see that there has been much wrong thinking. We realize that many dangerous radical thinkers have assumed leadership. We are confronted with the fact that men who have little formal education and few, if any, opportunities to master the art of thinking rightly have arrogated to themselves dictatorial powers and have planned on the establishment of world empires, regardless of the means to be employed."

Opposed to the tenets of totalitarianism are the principles advocated by Catholic interracialism. The one denies, the other upholds the right of the Negro to a free and equal place in human society. Holding, first, that racism is a direct violation of divine law,

the interracialist proceeds to the assertion that it is also a cause of grave dissension within the nation and must be uprooted in the interest of both races. The recent Harlem "crime wave" is proof that by permitting totalist thinking to guide us, we are acting in a suicidal manner. Right thinking would long ago have cleaned out—or avoided—Harlem's slums; opened factory doors, taken care of needy families, helped bewildered adolescents to find a firm foothold in society.

It may seem a rash, if brave, undertaking for a small group to pit its limited strength against the tremendous reality of racial prejudice, particularly when that prejudice exists even among those who should be fighting with rather than against the group. But that is to ignore what recent history has taught us: that ideas are powerful weapons, that, in fact, as was said in THE REVIEW last month, propaganda is more powerful than armies. To combat the propaganda of totalitarian racialism, Christian youth must be preached in season and out. "There must be no moratorium on sound thinking," Bishop Corrigan says. Nor must there be a moratorium in the campaign to arouse consciences to duty—and wisdom—of combating doctrines that are based upon ignorance and a fundamental disregard of individual integrity.

The program of the Catholic interracial movement is largely educational. It is a program that seeks to enlist the support, not only of the young men and women being trained in universities for positions of leadership in the nation, but of housewives, factory workers, even children in the grade schools. It is a Catholic movement that stems from unalterable religious truths. It is also an American movement that harmonizes with and would put into effect, without exceptions, the democratic commitments of the nation's charter. Just as truth always prevails in the end, so will the ultimate victory rest with those who refuse to accept the anti-Negro heresy of which Nazism is merely the most recent expression.

St. Benedict the Moor

Catholics who read his life story are invariably impressed by the startling evidences of the divine favor vouchsafed to Blessed Martin de Porres. Daily their prayers grow that he may soon be formally admitted to the roll of the Church's great saints. Mingled

in prayers for this event are the petitions which the Negroes of North America address to their patron, St. Benedict the Moor, born four centuries ago of Negro slave parents in the island of Sicily.

Like Martin de Porres, Benedict gave early proof of the sanctity that was to mark his life. At the age of ten this Negro youth was already known as "The Holy Moor." When the community of hermits whose austerities he shared and even exceeded was dispersed, he joined the Friars Minor of the Observance as a simple lay brother in the convent of St. Anne of Juliana. Three years later he was called to the Palermo house, where he remained for the rest of his life.

His extraordinary virtue could not long escape notice. In the kitchen where he worked as cook, it was often asserted that the angels assisted him in his tasks and that somehow food seemed to multiply miraculously under his hands. Innumerable were the little acts of kindness he showered upon the Brothers.

He was completely at a loss when the brethren asked him to head their small congregation. He was not a priest and, furthermore, he could neither read nor write. But his protestations were swept aside with a smile. He proved an ideal superior. His judgments were sound. His orders, tactfully given, were cheerfully carried out.

Unschooling as he was, in some strange way, he was able to expound the Sacred Scriptures in a way that impressed priests and novices and his intuitive grasp of obscure points of theology amazed even the learned. The veneration he inspired increased rather than lessened when, to his joy, he was at last permitted to return to his modest duties in the kitchen. All day long he was besieged by visitors. Distinguished individuals, even the Viceroy himself, came seeking his advice and asking his prayers. At the age of sixty-three he died, leaving behind him the example of a life of deep piety and rigid but cheerful austerity.

To Catholics familiar with these facts it means nothing that St. Benedict was a Negro. That he was a saint is, however, a matter of transcendent interest. His story is recalled by interracialists to bare to less perceptive eyes the challenging truth that, since neither color nor race have any meaning with God, it is surely presumptuous for men to differentiate even by a hair's breadth in the treatment of a race that has brought forth not one or two or several, but unnumbered legions of God's faithful ones.

Notes From XAVIER UNIVERSITY

The First Catholic College for Negro Youth

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

In a recent program by the world famous Metropolitan Opera Company of New York, and dedicated to the City of New Orleans for its achievements in the field of classical and operatic music, high praise was given to the efforts of the Department of Music at Xavier. In this radio broadcast, over a nation-wide hook-up, it was pointed out that Xavier was the first institution in the deep South to present a complete operatic production with an all-student cast. The annual presentation of grand opera by the students of the University is anxiously awaited each year by music lovers of Louisiana.

SOCIAL SERVICE

Under the leadership of Dr. Frederick G. Reuss, acting director, the School of Social Service at Xavier will soon publish its new bulletin. The school emphasizes in addition to the regular case work training for social workers, the special need for a study of group work, housing, and community organization for the colored social worker. Dr. Reuss is well qualified for the position he holds as an instructor and acting director of the school. In Germany, he had been Councilor of State and head of the Department of Social Welfare and Social Insurance of the Ministry of Transportation prior to the rise of Hitler. A short time later, Dr. Reuss voluntarily left Germany and came to the United States. He is a member of the American Association of Social Workers and was awarded the degree of Master of Social Service by the Catholic University of America.

CHRISTMAS FUND

Students of Xavier are presently making preparations for the annual distribution of baskets of food to the poor at Christmas. The University will hold its annual Christmas dance on the Friday before Christmas and the funds derived from the sale of tickets will be used to purchase the food.

THE CATHOLIC NEGRO IN THE CONFRATERNITY

By LOUIS T. ACHILLE

To the Catholic observer of world events, three things are now quite apparent: first, that the conflict now raging is the result of man's disregard for the laws which, in God's own plans, were to govern His own Creation; second, that much of this carnage and misery would have been avoided if the Catholic laity had evinced on the political, social and economic planes the same virtues which many of them practice on the moral and religious planes; third, that if the world of tomorrow is to be a better one, thousands of enlightened, responsible lay Catholics will be needed who, through Catholic Action, will cooperate with Clergy and Government, to integrate the evangelical principles in the life of the individual, the nation and the world.

While it is, in many respects, one of the first victims of the world's injustices, the Negro race nevertheless shares responsibility for the tragic plight of the world and the sins of this nation, because, like other races, it bears the inherited stigma of sin and has been called upon by Christ to obey His commands and share in the heavenly rewards.

In the discharge of this responsibility we must take into consideration the fact that the vast majority of Negroes find themselves outside the fold of the Church that we know and believe to be the true depository and administrator of the New and Eternal Testament of Christ. Indeed our faith would not be very deep, if we could complacently tolerate the thought that those outside the Church are just as fortunate as we are; our understanding and application of the Divine Command of Love would be rather superficial, if, being so happy as to have access to Truth, we selfishly enjoyed this benefit, without wanting our neighbor to share in the same privilege.

In spite of the trend away from churches, masses of Negroes are still so clamoring for religion that they accept it even in disguise and travesty, in falsification and heresy. They will not fail to respond if the Catholic message is delivered to them in its dramatic extremeness as well as its admirable adaptation to human diversities. In this respect one may expect a better response from the working classes, yet unspoiled by a "liberal" pride-breeding education and by the debilitation of comfort, than from many of the educated well-to-do class. I believe that the resources

in sanctity of the vast, patient, generous Negro race have hardly been tapped. Startling discoveries may well be expected from this unpredictable people.

However, there are wider, if not holier, possibilities for you who are trained in the spirit, methods and action of the Confraternity.

Although the purpose of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine is specifically catechetical, and although all of its members may not be interested in or gifted for other kinds of leadership, it seems normal that the sense of responsibility developed in this apostolate should make the teacher a devoted servant of his community in other fields. It should make him discover new possibilities for Catholic Action in his profession or occupation, thereby acquiring a new and increased interest in them. It would not be surprising to see the members of the parish unit develop into leaders in the civic enterprises of their community and in their occupational activities, for the qualities required therein are not fundamentally different from those which the catechetical apostolate demands and develops.

What are those qualities? There seems to be three major ones. First a desire to help without hope of material gain, in other words, an inability to resist the call to labor unselfishly for a worthy cause. This is nothing but the basic virtue of Christianity.

Secondly, the apostolate requires a sound knowledge of the tenets of our faith, a clear, honest understanding of them, which alone makes for competent teaching.

Finally, that quality which the work of the Confraternity develops; regularity, promptness, a sense of organization, order and hierarchy, an ability to obey as well as to command.

It is not disparaging to the Negro race to recognize that to its racial qualities of generosity, human sympathy and forgiveness of injuries, it still has to add, as a race, greater habits of clear thinking, intellectual competence, regularity and self-discipline which make for successful leadership. These qualities, some of which even our good colleges do not seem to create in Negro youth, can be gained in the service of the apostolate better than anywhere else, because of their sanctifying motive and goal.

For our college youth, colored and white, there is

in the study and teaching of our Faith an excellent opportunity to utilize their intellectual training, to supplement their college courses—unfortunately lacking in religious training. Here is an opportunity to capitalize hours of leisure and to awaken in them the inner spring of leadership. This inner spring of leadership does not lie in the intellect, but in the will, in the heart, in the soul, whose development is generally not the concern of our non-Catholic colleges. Those who have boys and girls going or intending to go to college will do their children an immense service by insisting that they make Catholic Action an integral part of their four years of college life.

Parental advice will, however, be better accepted by children if, during their childhood, they have seen their fathers and mothers busily engaged in the same apostolic work.

Finally, our educated men and women, often so busy with professional advancement, money-making or social life, will find a world and perhaps eternity of benefits in participating in this work. Our colored intelligentsia seem more and more to turn their backs on the Church, and to ask from professional and technical proficiency the inner security which their fore-

fathers begged from God, in which, I must say, they follow a definite trend of the times. Some of our own Catholic elite now relinquish the Church because of some local parish regulations which offend them. It is up to us lay Colored Catholics to show to our colored intelligentsia that it is possible to be educated and still have a firm belief in God. Let us show them that religion has not passed with slavery, and that our academic degrees do not keep us from falling on our knees to pray to God.

Let us repeat that the need of every class is a crying one for all peoples and especially for those that are most handicapped. Shall we not accept the challenge? Shall we not show to the world's doubting millions that this young race is not stunted nor its soul enslaved by moral subjection? Let us find in the work of the apostolate a holy utilization of the time, energy and money which prejudice keeps us from spending in many an attractive restaurant, theater or dance hall. Let us contribute to national and international life a love not for power but for justice, not for the riches of the land but for those of the soul, not so much for our neighbor's property, but for his true happiness in the freedom of the children of God.

CALLING CATHOLIC LEADERS

By THE EDITORS

The experience of those who have long been active in the Catholic Interracial movement demonstrates very clearly the importance of securing the active interest and collaboration of other groups engaged in Catholic Social action as well as Catholic leaders in many different fields of activity.

When we take into consideration the fact that the Negro—comprising one-tenth of our population—is the most restricted and disadvantaged of all American minority groups, it becomes evident that nearly every Catholic organization must encounter many of the causes and many of the far-reaching and disastrous consequences of race prejudice.

Basically, nearly all the problems confronting the Negro can be solved once public opinion insists upon the recognition of the equal, natural rights of all men

and the guarantees provided for all in the American Constitution and system of government.

In the meanwhile the many social, industrial and economic problems of the Negro are constantly within the scope of the programs of any number of Catholic organizations and groups. What is needed, then, is for these Catholic organizations and agencies to have a better understanding of this vast interracial problem in its entirety. Once this problem and the Catholic Interracial program are understood, it will be possible for the leaders of these various organizations to determine how they can best contribute within the sphere of their own activities.

CONSEQUENCES OF PREJUDICE

In order to understand the far-reaching consequences of anti-Negro prejudice in America and, more

directly, to appreciate how the restricted opportunities of the Negro concerns the welfare of all Americans it is necessary to consider a few important generalizations which cannot be questioned: Race prejudice bars the Negro from employment and denies him the living wage. . The lack of the average degree of morale among the Negroes in America has long been recognized. Racial despair is, unfortunately, too common among the thirteen million Negroes—thirteen million American citizens—who are denied opportunity, security and are discouraged over the prospects of their future progress.

CONSUMERS

Ten per cent of American consumers have a radically restricted buying capacity due to the fact that Negroes everywhere are denied the wages that are paid to others doing the same work. Many outstanding American economists contend that if Negroes were paid the same salary as white people doing the same work, that this alone would practically solve the present economic depression by increasing the consumer demand right here at home.

A brief outline of the various kinds of Catholic endeavor with a mention of the particular field wherein they come in contact with the so-called Negro problem would indicate the specific contributions that they may make to the solution of this problem.

CATHOLIC PRESS

The contributions already made by the Catholic press of America to the cause of interracial justice and improved race relations are today recognized by interracial leaders as well as Negro Catholic and non-Catholic educators, writers and leaders in all parts of the country. The Catholic Press is creating a better understanding and appreciation of the needs of the Negro and of the necessity and importance of the Catholic Interracial program. Innumerable news items and instructive editorials are constantly appearing in the pages of Catholic magazines and diocesan papers. Here is an example of the effectiveness of Catholic agencies in the field of race relations.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL ACTIONISTS AND CATHOLIC CHARITY ORGANIZATIONS

Leading Catholic sociologists have recognized and are whole-heartedly supporting the Catholic Interracial program. They have published many sociological text books in which the Negro and his par-

ticular problems are comprehensively analyzed. In many instances entire chapters are devoted to the social problems confronting the Negro, indicating that these Catholic leaders appreciate the fact that the Negro is by far the most disadvantaged group in American life.

Although workers in the field of Catholic Charities are including the needy Negro within their field of endeavor, it is to be doubted whether they fully appreciate that a relatively large number of Negroes must continue to be the recipient of public relief and private charity until such time as the race shares in the essential opportunities of life and in the full measure of social justice. Although charity responds to relieve the ravages of poverty, it is essential that Catholic social agencies and social workers should take the lead in pointing out the necessity of removing grave social injustices and denials of opportunity that are directly responsible for a large measure of the poverty to be found in every Negro community.

CATHOLIC LABOR MOVEMENT

Catholic interest in the just aspirations of American labor has been notable during the last decade, undoubtedly in response to the great Papal Encyclicals. The establishment of a steadily increasing number of Catholic labor schools in different parts of the country, the organization of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists and the Catholic Worker groups are the result of the recent interest in the cause of labor. At the same time, they are exercising a very salutary influence in the development and progress of trade unionism.

However, not as much can be said for the many Catholic leaders of labor unions in different parts of the country, Many of these are foremost among those who continue to deny the Negro admission to membership in the unions. These Catholic leaders are not exemplifying the principles of the Encyclicals. They are not truly representing either the best interests of organized labor or of their own unions or of American workers in general. Their prejudicial attitude is confusing the minds of many non-Catholics with regard to the teaching of the Church which is distinctly opposed to any and every form of racism.

Catholic social actionists who are particularly interested in the labor movement should do everything in their power to induce all Catholic labor leaders to live up to and exemplify the teachings of the Church

by exerting their influence to completely abolish prejudice from every labor organization and local unit.

CATHOLIC EMPLOYERS

Throughout the nation there are countless thousands of Catholic employers and personnel managers. They are to be found in nearly every industry and in every part of the country. Many of them have heard about the days when: "No Catholics need apply." Today they should be among the first to break down the un-American and un-Catholic barriers against the employment of qualified Negroes in every business and industry. Clearly this is in line with the principles of American democracy and the teachings of the Papal Encyclicals. When Catholic employers actually take his position, their influence will be far reaching among all American businesses and industries.

CATHOLICS IN PUBLIC LIFE

With the exception of certain areas in the South, a large number of Catholics are leaders in public life: as executives, judges, legislators and administrative heads of departments in the Federal, State and Municipal governments. Although certain Catholic public officials have taken a forthright stand on behalf of the rights of the Negro, the vast majority, sad to say, are apathetic, disinterested or guilty of anti-Negro prejudice. Too often, they act as politicians coldly and calculatingly bartering for the Negro vote in exchange for jobs, patronage and the slightest possible concession to the needs of the Negro community. Frequently they are the first to cry out a warning against Communism, unmindful of the fact that they are primarily responsible for the political corruption, maladministration and inefficiencies that give the Communists their most plausible arguments. It is to be hoped that Catholic social actionists throughout the country will insist that Catholics in public life show genuine interest in the welfare of the disadvantaged Negro groups.

CATHOLIC EDUCATORS AND INTELLECTUALS

The vast majority of the leaders in the field of Catholic education are cooperating wholeheartedly in the Catholic Interracial program. Many Catholic writers and lecturers are cooperating in their own fields. Their influence is effective and far reaching. It is necessary to point out, however, that the faculties of many of our Catholic colleges are reluctant to admit the duly qualified Catholic Negro student. The im-

mediate responsibility lies at the doors of the Catholic educators of America.

CATHOLIC YOUTH PROGRAM

The work that Catholic leaders are doing both on behalf of neglected youth and in securing the active participation of Catholic Youth leaders in the ranks of Catholic Action has won the admiration of all who are interested in the welfare of American Youth. The policy of the Catholic child-caring institutions and foster homes on behalf of Negro children has evoked universal admiration. The example of Boys' Town, CYO organizations and Catholic Boy Scouts is a challenge to Catholics in other fields of endeavor. It must be pointed out, however, that there is a need of more Catholic boys' groups, scout organizations, Big Brothers and Sister groups in nearly every large Negro center. The disastrous consequences of interracial injustice directly effect Negro homes and family life. As a result, a larger number of Negro children are in need of the aid and guidance of these Catholic youth agencies. The work already being done in every large city by Catholics of both races for our Negro youth should inspire greater financial assistance and the active cooperation of Catholics who are more fortunately situated.

CONCLUSION

It is the considered opinion of this REVIEW that influential Catholic laymen and women in all parts of the country can make distinct contributions to the Catholic Interracial program. In nearly every department of Catholic social action some phase of the interracial problem is encountered. First of all, it is necessary that the leaders in these organizations become familiar with this great American problem, this great and important Catholic problem. It is necessary to study the problem and understand the remedies to be found in the Catholic Interracial program and then determine how the organizations to which they belong may effectively collaborate in this program for interracial justice.

To the thousands of Catholics who are participating in the program of social reconstruction as defined in the Encyclicals, we point out that there can be no social justice in American life if interracial justice be denied.

The Catholic Interracial program is an important challenge to all Catholic social actionists.

REFLECTIONS OF A SEMINARIAN

By MICHAEL LENSING, O.S.B.

The essential reason why we should hold and seek to establish true equality of races is found in the dignity and nature of man. Every man has been created to the image and likeness of God; everyone, actually or potentially, has been redeemed at the price of the Blood of the God-man Christ, and everyone is a child and called to be an heir of God. Because this is true each human being, "Jew or Greek, bond or free, male or female" has a tremendous and magnificent dignity, a dignity that can never be obscured by personal shortcomings, a dignity that can never be rationally ignored in an evaluation of a fellowman—even in a practical, everyday evaluation. This dignity commands a certain measure of respect and regard, postulates certain essential, inalienable rights with corresponding duties on the part of fellowmen and society. The whole fabric of genuine Christianity—Universality of the Redemption of Christ, the reality of sin and merit—stands or falls on the affirmation or negation of the essential equality of all men. Perhaps this may seem to be exaggerating; certainly it is strange and alien to our modern world, so proud of its sense of the "practical", so intolerant of meaningful dogma and conduct-determining "myths."

Getting away from principles and generalizations, let us consider the nature of man and see what it postulates in the way of specific norms of action, formative of personal and practical attitudes. All men are endowed with life, intellect and a free will, and a destiny. The rights accruing from these endowments of the Author of nature are stated in our own Declaration of Independence as the rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. It is unnecessary to enumerate what these rights embrace. The third right, which is the one most commonly denied the Negro, includes the right to the essential opportunities of life and a full measure of social justice.

The right to the pursuit of happiness continues to be grossly impugned by the majority of white Americans. Psychologists tell us the bugaboo most destructive of human happiness is the parasitical, mental complex born of consciousness of some real or imaginary defect. I feel most safe in saying that one thing we never let a black man forget is that he is black. We should always remember that the Negro experiences the same yearnings we do, he has the

points of sensitiveness that we have. As the achievements of men, the gifts of science, the glories of our age and civilization surrounding all of us catch their eye, as well as ours, then surely the consciousness that because of color most of these things are denied them, must present to them a real and tragic wailing wall. Speaking generally, everywhere throughout the country the Negro is ostracized and segregated, he is barred from jobs in the upper brackets of any field of endeavor, he is exploited on a large scale by white employers, he is denied the educational facilities of the whites, and he is not invited to sit at the conference tables of the land to seek out justice for his race and people—a people that forms nearly one-tenth of the total population. These are more evident and general conditions inconsonant with the right to the essential opportunities of life and a full measure of social justice.

But, it may be asked, what are the sociological implications involved in racial equality? What would be the results? What are the facts? Sociologically, equality would make for the economic, cultural and spiritual uplift of the Negro which could not but react favorably on the nation as a whole. Most of all, it blends into the designs of the all-wise Creator, Who has intended society for the full development of individual possibilities and social benefits, which in a give and take process, ultimately determines the measure of the real common good. I see no necessity of lowering standards or submitting to a leveling process in order to effect what substantially constitutes racial equality. There are many traits and aptitudes peculiar to the Negro that would make delightful and salutary additions to the body of civilization. Such are the sociological implications involved and the results to be expected, ideal perhaps, but, insofar as they are realized, invaluable.

The difficulty of maintaining ideals in the modern world is not easily appreciated by one in a Monastery. Monasticism is through and through idealistic and its long, unchanged and uninterrupted existence through fifteen centuries is eloquent testimony not only of God's grace and help, but also of the power and practicability inherent in His ideals.

The real test of our ideals is not the success we meet in promoting them in the world at large. It is

the success we have in living them in our lives—the personal influence and power. Their value and merit are measured by one ultimate yardstick: their conformity with Eternal Truth, the eternal verities of things as known by right reason and divine faith. Compromise may be constructively the best policy in our world, doomed to the scene of ceaseless struggle between good and evil on account of the primordial tragedy of sin. Of course, compromise is ideal as a policy, but never as an *ideal*. It can never be more than the best temporary policy: a stepping stone to higher and better things. But since our ideals are rooted and developed in truth, compromise can never be an ideal and can never be satisfactory, for the most cogent reason that it is always a half-measure and a straddling of truth and falsehood.

I believe the brotherhood of man a reality, because I find it necessary to believe the Fatherhood of God a reality. Common parentage is the source of all that makes real brother-relationship and that gives rise to brotherliness.

The only means that will restore balance to that topsy-turvy and inebriating world of tumbling and ego-blurred images is a good dose of humility.

Christmas — 1941

This year, little Christ-King,
Make Your's a different Advent
Than the humble stable-birth the world so long has
known.

This year, no manger-bed be Your's to lie in,
but a throne
Raised high above the earth, for all to see.
Let there be a trumpet-sound and heraldry
And unto every man a single star
To light him to the mountain where You are.

Then, when they come (Not even *they* too late!)
Who, from their war-red scaffolding of hate
As from a throne, would rule your blessed land,
Fill them with awe and terror and disgrace
To see so small a Child in such a place
Asleep, with peace held in His small, clenched Hand
And love and wisdom dancing shadows on His Face.

—MARGARET MCCORMACK



PLAYS And A Point Of View

By THEOPHILUS LEWIS

CONDITIONS IN HARLEM

Just before the Japanese attack monopolized public attention New York newspapers were making a nine days sensation of an outbreak of lawlessness in the city's huge Negro sections. Hysterical white people began to clamor that something be done to curb the Negro "crime wave." Negro shamans, in full ritual regalia, leaped forward to defend the good name of their community, charging that the newspaper stories were a foul attempt to besmirch the honor of the race. As there was no general public excitement, the uproar remained in the realm of the comical . . . to those with a taste for grotesque humor.

Experienced readers know that newspapers can manufacture a crime wave any time the editors are in the mood. The process is comparatively simple. In any city with a population of fifty thousand or more the matter of daily arrests is fairly constant. Most of the violations are never mentioned in the press, for lack of news value or lack of space. Metropolitan papers do not even publish all the really serious crimes committed in a city on a given day. The surplus of unreported arrests makes it possible for a city editor to produce what looks like a crime wave any time it serves his purpose. All he has to do is to publish most of the crimes committed every day for a week or two and his readers will get the impression that there has been a sudden and alarming increase in law-breaking. They will not suspect that the actual prevalence of crime is no higher than normal. They will assume that more crimes are being committed because more crimes are being reported.

The technique of producing a synthetic crime wave may be applied to an entire city, a limited section, or any element of the population. By playing up the Sicilian names appearing on the police blotters a paper can convince its readers that the Italian quarter is a hotbed of crime. By concentrating on the brawls that occur in expensive night clubs the public can be led to believe that the Social Register set is rotting in debauchery and wasting the substance produced by the hard-working and virtuous poor.

Spurious crime waves are invented for numerous reasons, but the usual motive is political. Southern newspapers frequently "expose" the appalling lawlessness of the black belt as a campaign build-up for charlatans like Bilbo and Tammadge. The practice, it is only fair to observe, is less prevalent in Southern journalism than it was in the last generation.

Nor are Negroes the only victims of artificial crime waves. In the Presidential campaign of 1936 a leading paper in the Middle West, in an effort to create anti-New Deal sentiment, made a practice of featuring moral delinquency stories under such headlines as, "Vice Rampant in Roosevelt Wards."

Mercenary publishers have been known to launch crusades against crime that was wholly imaginary in an effort to boost circulation. Reporters, behind the backs of their city editors, have faked crime waves for a gag. The latter type of crime wave was amusingly described by Lincoln Steffens in his autobiography. Theodore Roosevelt, when he was police commissioner of New York, had a tiff with the reporters assigned to his office. The vexed reporters ganged up on the Commissioner and gave their respective papers the details of every crime reported in police headquarters. In a few days people began to hint that Roosevelt was the world's worst chief of police. The Commissioner, fortunately for him, understood the ways of reporters and the power of the press. He was also blessed with a sense of humor. Before his reputation was irreparably impaired, he called the reporters to his office, passed cigars around and called the feud off.

It is not the aim of these observations to imply that the stories of lawbreaking in Harlem and other Negro sections of New York are mere figments of reporters' imaginations. There are ample reasons for believing that the picture is rather darker than it has been painted. There are reasons just as ample for doubting that the city is menaced by a Negro crime wave. A crime wave means a sudden upward spurt in violations of the law.

If the moral condition of Negro New York is deplorable, the attitude of its leaders is hardly less disturbing. Most of them do not bother to deny that violations of the law are rising in their communities. They tacitly admit that young Negroes are turning toward crime as a vocation, and blame the increase in delinquency on poor housing, old and overcrowded schools, a lack of parks, playgrounds and other recreational facilities, and employment discrimination which makes it difficult for Negroes to find work in gainful occupations. "We are victims of our environment," they complain. "Improve our environment and we will be better citizens."

Apparently, they are unaware of the fact that they are empirically and morally wrong. There is little evidence in human experience to support the proposition that men are made better by a better environment. The testimony of history inclines toward the opposite side, indicating that both individuals and nations tend to grow corrupt as they grow rich.

When our leaders assert that the rise of delinquency among Negroes is the result of outside or material causes it is equivalent to renouncing responsibility for the morale of the race. Leadership always implies responsibility. Negro leaders share definite responsibility for the excess of crimes committed by their compatriots. If they cannot curb the tendency toward lawlessness in their race, if they are unable to enforce moral discipline, their leadership appears to be in default. Which is a sad thought to carry into the hard days ahead.

AS YOUTH SEES IT

EDITED BY YOUTH

It is impossible for any of us, reading the New York daily newspapers, not to have noticed the many articles on the recent so-called "crime-wave" in Harlem. To those who are acutely interested in the interracial problem, who are seeking to champion its cause, the news contained in these articles is profoundly shocking.

Yet this should not occasion in us a loss of faith in the Negro; rather should it serve as a greater condemnation of the white man who answers the Biblical question "Who is my neighbor?" with the words: "He who is white, as I am."

* * * * *

The "New York Times," in its section *Letters to the Times*, has recently carried three extremely telling letters on this very subject. The first of these letters, dated November 15, was written by the well-known author and social-thinker, Pearl Buck. This letter, to which two-and-one-half entire columns were given over, is full of closely-packed indictments against the system of society which denies the Negro his birthright. "As a result of the effects of race prejudice, a very serious conviction is gradually becoming settled in the minds of colored Americans all over our country. They are coming to see that what they have been taught and have believed is not true—namely, that if colored people can be patient and good and show themselves obedient and humble they will inevitably prove themselves worthy citizens and will therefore receive the rewards of full citizenship. They are beginning to believe, and this in very large numbers, that individual or collective worth as human beings gains them nothing so long as they are Negroes. The hopefulness natural to their race is now changing to despair . . . This conviction of some colored leaders and many more colored people is rapidly permeating the whole twelve millions. When hope is taken away from a people moral degeneration follows swiftly after. Young colored men and women today are giving up hope of justice or security in their own country. When this hopelessness reaches down to certain strata in any society, outbreaks of crime are inevitable . . . The white American is conscious of this feeling now seething and mounting in the hearts of his colored countrymen. But the white American sedulously avoids acknowledging or indeed even facing it . . . We do not want to discover the real truth about the colored American, which is that our prejudice denies his democracy. We refuse to face it because we do not want to change the status of the colored person. We wish to keep him the servant of the white man.

"I read with complete approval of every plan to better the conditions under which colored people must live and work. But until race prejudice is conquered and its effects removed, the bitter fact remains that the colored American knows he will not get a better job for being better educated and better housed or for having in his childhood more playgrounds. He

will not be given an equal chance with the white American of his class and ability. Race prejudice will still deny democracy to him."

It is impossible not to find oneself moved by Pearl Buck's letter. But to be momentarily moved is not enough: we must be permanently moved to action.

* * * * *

Speaking in a more practical vein, the second of these letters, dated November 22nd, written by Robert P. Lane, Executive Director, Welfare Council of New York City, makes the following remarks: "Essential services are grossly lacking—such as day nurseries for children whose mothers are at work, frequently from early morning until late evening; supervised year-round settlement house and recreational facilities; family casework as a preventive measure so as to decrease the partially unmet need of foster home and institutional care for neglected and dependent Negro Protestant children; protective and correctional care for predelinquent Negro boys and girls, so that the Children's Court must not of necessity send them to inappropriate institutions or return them to the community without benefit of therapeutic treatment; convalescent care for all categories of Negro patients; mental hygiene services; evening clinics; adequate hospital facilities; sufficient specialized educational personnel and school facilities; well-balanced home-relief budgets, with emphasis on increase in amount of budget to offset the rising cost of living. This is not a complaint list, but illustrates amply the need for increased social services, voluntary and public.

"Finally, there is every indication, including the recent election of a member of the City Council from the Harlem community, that Harlem itself is anxious to do all that it can to contribute to its own betterment. This is equally true of other Negro communities. Given a reasonably fair chance through enlargement of economic opportunities, there is every reason to suppose that the problems of Harlem will assume no greater proportion than the problems of other parts of the city with people of similar income levels."

In Mr. Lane's enumeration of those "essential services" lacking to the Negro, can we point to *one* which is lacking to the white man? This fact alone should make us realize the existence of great injustice towards the Negro.

* * * * *

The last of these three letters, dated November 25th, was written by Rev. John LaFarge, S.J., Associate Editor of *America*, who is also the beloved and exhaustlessly-zealous chaplain of our own Catholic Interracial Council

Father LaFarge commends Pearl Buck's letter, saying: "It takes, however, the penetrating mind and the courageous pen of a Pearl Buck, writing in your issue of November 15, to reveal a basic matter which is ever evaded. All that Harlem through its agencies does for itself, or that such agencies do for Harlem—or for the Bedford-Stuyvesant area, or for Newark's Tenth Ward, or Chicago's South Side, or for any other such region—is conditioned by the far reaching evil of race prejudice."

Father La Farge goes on to point out the moral evil of race-prejudice, issuing the following advice: "But it is not enough to deplore this prejudice or to point out its menace to the peace or welfare of our entire democracy. Such apathy and such prejudice, if not wholly curable, can at least be lessened and robbed of their most poisonous attributes by systematic, combined and intelligent effort.

Great religious leaders, including the authorities of the Catholic Church, have repeatedly denounced the moral evil of race prejudice both here and abroad. It must be preached, condemned as a sin, by religious and patriotic standards, if any bounds are to be placed to its effects. If even a minute proportion of the funds, public and private, that are annually spent in this country for national works for the educational and social welfare of the Negro were devoted to this specific task of educating the public in the religiously grounded principles of interracial justice, the usefulness and indeed the continuance of such works would be immeasurably insured.

It is for us in New York to take the lead. Unless we do so, we cannot expect the nation to follow."

* * * * *

Christmas is upon us once more: Christmas—the time of giving, the time in which God gave us His Son in order that we might buy back our heirship to the eternal kingdom. Let us remember that God excluded no race from His Christmas Gift. Thus mindful, let us include the Negro in *our* Christmas giving—not so much in our temporal giving as in the gift of things of the spirit: understanding and love and encouragement, and a welcome into our order of Brotherhood by virtue of his equality with us in God's order of Sonship.

—M. McCORMACK

FROM HERE AND THERE DURING THE MONTH

● BISHOP CUSHING ENCOURAGES CATHOLIC INTERRACIAL WORK

Boston, Dec. 9.—Proposed establishment of a Catholic Interracial Council in Boston was encouraged by the Most Rev. Richard J. Cushing, Auxiliary Bishop of Boston, in an address at the annual Communion Breakfast of the Knights of Peter Claver at Blessed Sacrament Mission, Roxbury.

"Justice first, even before charity; this is the natural order, the supernatural order, the God-given order, the Catholic order," Bishop Cushing said. "If strict justice, the barest justice, were only meted out to the Negro, there would be no interracial problem."

Stating that the colored "want no paternalism," Bishop Cushing said that "all they want is the opportunity accorded them by strict justice."

The Interracial Council will bring together lawyers, physicians, teachers, civil servants, newspaper men and business

men of white and Colored races. One of its most important committees will be that on Employment Opportunity, which will seek to remove barriers to employment in places where the Colored are now excluded.

● SURVEY OF NEGRO POPULATION OF JOHNSTOWN, PA., IS COMPLETED

Johnstown, Pa.—The desirability of a church ministry interested not only in spiritual needs but in the general welfare of the people, the need of health and recreation programs and in an adequate housing program are stressed among the conclusions published in a "Survey of the Negro Population of Metropolitan Johnstown, Pennsylvania," which has just been completed.

The survey was made at the suggestion of the Rev. William M. Griffin, director of Catholic charities of the Altoona diocese and was sponsored by two local newspapers, the Tribune and the Democrat. Its preparation was first suggested to Walter W. Krebs, editor and publisher of the Tribune and chairman of the Johnstown Interracial Commission, by Father Griffin in the course of a community chest meeting.

Miss Florence M. Hornback, dean of the school of social service, Xavier university, New Orleans, who was consulted at Father Griffin's suggestion, directed the field work of the survey.

Information for the survey was obtained on 1,801 of the 1,918 colored persons of the Johnstown area.

"The churches have a special significance for the colored people of the area and attendance is second only to employment as the predominant interest," is stated in one of the conclusions resulting from the survey.

● BOEING AIRCRAFT COMPANY HAS "NO PLACE FOR NEGRO WORKERS"

Chicago—The Boeing Aircraft company, Seattle, holders of extensive contracts to manufacture aircraft for the army and navy "has no place for negro workers" in its plant. Saturday, their representatives sent here to interview workers because of a scarcity of available labor in the northwest, flatly refused the application of Robert L. Weaver, a qualified engineering draftsman of this city, because of his color, or because of his race, for Mr. Weaver is quite as light in complexion as the swarthy Boeing representative who turned him down.

Weaver, who completed his year's enlistment with the 184th field artillery Nov. 24, receiving a transfer to inactive service, was advised by the Michigan Employment service that Boeing was in need of men and was sending a representative to Chicago Dec. 4 to hire all available skilled men. Weaver's discharge papers cite the fact that he is a draftsman and grade him as excellent.

● NEW AFRICAN SEMINARY HAS THIRTY NATIVE STUDENTS

Roumi, Ivory Coast, Africa, No. 24—(N.C.W.C.—Fides)—Thirty native seminarians are already being trained as the buildings of the major intervicarial seminary here near completion.

The seminary is destined to serve the Vicariates of Bamako, Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso and the Prefecture of Nzerekore. Its superior, Father Dupont, has recently been elected Vicar Apostolic of Bobo-Dioulasso. Three of the seminarians are subdeacons and courses are conducted by four professors.

● LARGEST LOCAL UNION ELECTS NEGRO OFFICER

Detroit, Mich., Nov. 22—The Ford local of the United Automobile Workers, (CIO), whose 90,000 members constitute the largest local union in the country, elected a Negro automobile worker as an official of the union at an election meeting held here this week at Chadsey High School.

The man was Shelton Tapps, well-known Negro leader and member of the National Negro Congress, who was named secretary of the local.

As if to implement this action which highlighted the growing unity of Negro and white workers in the automobile industry, the national council of Ford locals in forty cities, which represents 130,000 workers, unanimously adopted a strong resolution condemning the Ku Klux Klan and other splitting agencies that try to divide Negro and white workers.

● UNITED STATES NAVY YARDS EMPLOY MORE NEGRO CIVILIANS

Dec. 12—Negro civilian employment in United States Navy Yards increased by more than one hundred per cent during the year ending September 30, 1941, Dr. Robert C. Weaver, Chief of the Negro Employment and Training Branch of the Labor Division of OPM, announced this week.

According to the findings of a survey made public by Dr. Weaver, a total of 13,401 Negro technical, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers were employed in United States Navy Yards on Sept. 30, 1941, as compared to 5,934 such workers on September 30, 1940. During the same period, the percentage of Negro workers in these yards increased from 6.03 per cent to 8.08 per cent of the total employment figures.

● I. C. C. ORDERS RAILROAD TO ACCOMMODATE NEGROES

Washington, Nov. 19—The Interstate Commerce Commission today ordered the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railway to provide for Negroes, traveling to Arkansas at first-class fares on through journeys from Chicago to Hot Springs, accommodations "substantially equal" to those provided for white passengers.

The commission's order was in compliance with the Supreme Court decision in a proceeding brought by Representative Arthur W. Mitchell, of Chicago, only Negro member of Congress.

The I. C. C. originally dismissed the Mitchell complaint. In its order today, it held that the accommodations for him on April 27, 1937, and other Negro passengers traveling in Arkansas over the Rock Island at first-class fares on through trips from Chicago at Hot Springs, "were, are and for the future will be unduly periodical to colored passengers and unduly preferential of white passengers" when not substan-

tially equal to accommodations provided its white passengers. The commission gave the Rock Island until Dec. 24 to "cease and desist from practicing the undue prejudice and the discrimination herein found to exist."

The Negro Representative traveling from Chicago to Hot Springs on a first-class ticket, was required to ride in a car provided for Negroes after the train entered Arkansas. He contended his accommodations were inferior to those available to white passengers.

—N. Y. Herald-Tribune

● PRIEST'S HOUSING PROJECT
CITED AS MODEL FOR NATION

Phoenix, Ariz.—One of the best public housing records in the nation has been made by the Phoenix Housing Authority in Phoenix, Ariz., for Negro families. Rev. Emmett McLaughlin, O.F.M., pastor of St. Monica's Church, is the chairman and most active member of the authority. A total of 640 homes has been built at an average cost of \$1,750 per home. These run from four to six rooms and rent from \$9 to \$17 a month. The project, which Father McLaughlin initiated two years ago in a campaign to provide decent homes for the poor families in his area, promises to be self-liquidating. He says that the low cost of the homes was made possible through local control and use of local materials. Plenty of space is provided between buildings. Father McLaughlin was recently made president of the Western Association of Housing Authorities.

BOOKS

"THE IMITATION OF CHRIST" Edited with an introduction from Whitford's Version printed by Robert Wyer in 1530, by EDWARD J. KLEIN, PH.D. Harper and Bros. \$3.00.

Here is a work of great scholarly value, one which is extremely important in the world of spiritual literature.

It is gradually becoming an accepted fact that the literature of the Anglo-Saxon and Middle English tongues (long sadly neglected), is vastly stronger in expression than that of the softer, Latin-flavored English reigning supreme for so many literary generations.

Keeping this thesis in mind, Mr. Klein has gone back to the Whitford translation of the second most widely read religious book, "De Imitatione Christe" of Thomas a Kempis. Although, as Mr. Klein points out, there have been countless renditions into English of this work, the Whitford version, for quite some time the most popular, has been forgotten in the modernization of the book for current use. He has undertaken this task with reverence, with straightforward scholarly interest, stripping it of any of the saccharine piousity so often used by translators of religious books.

Mr. Klein's purpose in modernizing Whitford's translation is to afford us the pleasure and the value of reading it, sparing us, at the same instant, the inconvenience of having to decipher the unfamiliar dictum and spelling of Whitford's day.

In his introduction, Mr. Klein makes interesting comparisons between Whitford's translation and those of other translators, quoting first the original Latin excerpt. It will be noted that the Whitford translation, while strictly literal in adhering to the sense of the original, does not make the fatal translator's error of strictly literal translation of the individual word. There is a freshness, a sharp pictorial definiteness, a sinewy quality to his translation which the others wholly through the use of vague or over-literal phraseology.

In the following example Pohl's original Latin translation is listed first, followed by Whitford's version; the three versions which follow are not definitely ascribed with authorship by Klein but merely lettered O. S. B. It will be noted that, of these three, the first two suffer from over-literality, while the last loses the simplicity by an over-padded, almost euphuistic style.

Pohl: Fili. Sta firmiter et spera in me. Quid enim sunt verba nisi verba? Per aerem volant: sed lapidem non laedunt (45)

Whitford: My son, saith our Lord, stand strongly and trust faithfully in me. What be words but wind? They fly in the air, but they hurt never a stone on the ground.

O: My son, stand steadily, and put thy trust in me; for what are words but words? They fly through the air, but a stone they cannot hurt.

B: Son, stand firm and trust in Me. For what are words but words? They fly through the air, but a stone they cannot hurt.

S: Stand fast, my son, and be not terrified with the shock of calumny and reproach, but let me be thy refuge and sure confidence. Alas, what are words but empty sounds that break and scatter in the air, and make no real impression.

It is impossible, in this short review, to discuss minutely the various parts of this modernization of Whitford's translation. It is for us all to read and be grateful to Mr. Klein. For, although his approach is primarily that of the scholar and not of the man of religion, he has succeeded in adding scholarly literary value to a great religious work and, at the same stroke, has crystalized its spiritual import making it clearer and more heart-reaching than ever before.

ROYAL ROAD: By ARTHUR KUHL. Sheed & Ward. 189 pages. \$1.75.

This is the story of a Negro who goes to the electric chair for a crime he did not commit. But that is not all this book has to tell. A deeper story unfolds wordlessly through its pages, casting the reader's mind beyond the tragedy that stalks at the heels of honest, baffled Jesse Stewart to the immeasurably vaster and more distressing tragedy of race prejudice.

You sense this even as Father Malcolm explains to a group of Negro parishioners the beautiful doctrine of the Mystical Body. To two of them—Jesse, and his mother, Mary—he

imparts his blessing as they leave for another city where work may be found. But Jesse finds it impossible to land a job. Arrested on a charge of vagrancy, he tells the judge: "Ah guess Ah've tried ev'ry place theah is in this town. Dey don' much like colahed people heah, jedge. It don' take long to fin' that out." He is told that if he registers at the relief station the charge will be dropped. But relief is not easy to get, even for the destitute. Leaving the cold, cheerless room he shares with his mother, Jesse wanders into the night, to be swept inexorably to the doom that awaits him.

Before the night is over, he is arrested on a charge of purse snatching. Because fear of being falsely accused makes him take to his heels when a woman shrills that her purse has been stolen, because a roll of money—slipped into his pocket by one of his false companions—is found on him, his guilt seems certain. He is booked for trial. A photographer snaps him standing beside his accuser. Somewhere in the city a woman picks up a newspaper and is confronted by the picture of a Negro she later swears assaulted and killed her mother a short time before. Hopeless, utterly confused, the prisoner stubbornly maintains his innocence. A brutal third degree fails to "break" him. Then the trial, the flimsy mass of circumstantial evidence. The judge is inclined to grant a motion for dismissal on grounds of insufficient evidence. But in his chambers the District Attorney pumps some political "sense" into him.

Maybe we made a mistake when we took the case to trial. But the story had broken. The Negro was tabbed as a killer, and we had to go through with it. Imagine the stink there'd have been if I'd dropped the charges. Anyway—it's no skin off your nose. He's being tried by twelve good men and true—well, ten men and two women—who represent this city's collective conscience. They're the ones who're going to decide this case, not you . . . And, Judge, they don't have to stand election with their party in April. You do.

Jesse is sentenced and dies, consoled by the ministrations of the prison chaplain. His body is claimed by his mother. Her name is Mary. And the father's name? Joseph. And where was he born? "In Pennsylvania, suh, in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania." Just thirty-three years before.

There you have it. The visualization, not of Jesse Stewart but of the whole colored race in some mystical way walking the royal road along which Christ went to His death and resurrection. There is real talent in this restrained and haunting first novel by a young graduate of St. Louis University. In its theme it bears some resemblance to Richard Wright's *Native Son*, but it has none of the bitterness and cumulative horror that accent the tragedy of Bigger Thomas. Jesse Stewart is a normal, healthy-minded individual, the antithesis of the calloused, brooding creation of Mr. Wright's searing pen. The one is the rare, neurotic type, the other the Negro as we know him in everyday life. Patient, anxious to get work, devoted to his mother, but doomed to poverty and frustration, Jesse symbolizes the plight of countless thousands of his race. You will not read this book without being deeply stirred. You will lay it down many times to ponder in sheer pity over things that should never be.

T. F. D.

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